



City Councilmember
Carl DeMaio

News Release

DeMaio Releases “San Diego Serves” Volunteer Action Plan – Sets Goal of 1 Million Volunteer Hours A Year by 2016

*Outlines 13 Initiatives and Urges Change in Local Government
Employee Union Rules to Increase Volunteerism in the City Programs*

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SAN DIEGO – Citing figures that place San Diego on the low end of “civic engagement” of major US cities, Councilmember DeMaio released his “San Diego Serves” volunteer action plan today outside of a closed recreation center – which he says could be opened if the city were willing to recruit and use volunteers more effectively in city departments.

“I believe San Diegans are willing to volunteer and serve their community. Unfortunately, the city has been resistant to and ineffective in using volunteer support. Inspiring San Diegans to give 1 million volunteer hours a year to community service programs may seem like a daunting goal, but if we change the culture at City Hall and implement the initiatives I am proposing, we can hit that target by 2016,” DeMaio pledged.

DeMaio expressed frustration that current city rules and culture discourage volunteer work in city departments. “City leaders should do their part to encourage volunteerism and should eliminate the government union rules that block volunteer service in city departments,” DeMaio noted.

In addition to changing these union rules, San Diego Serves’ contains 13 proposals to improve recruitment of city volunteers, partner with non-profits to expand community service programs, and address cross cutting challenges that create barriers or inhibit volunteer engagement. Among the ideas in DeMaio’s plan:

- Create a “Chief Volunteer Officer” in the Mayor’s Office to coordinate efforts
- Use City-TV to promote volunteer recruitment drives and spotlight non-profits.
- Launch an “E-Volunteer” Website and cell phone App for volunteer recruitment.
- Develop a “Volunteer Badge” program to streamline background checks and create a corps of trusted volunteers for the city and non-profits to draw from
- Form a Mayoral “Community Service Cabinet” to address non-profit challenges .
- Expand Neighborhood Watch and RSVP Programs

DeMaio is also proposing the City of San Diego formally join other major US cities in the “Cities of Service” Initiative – which provides best practice and grant funds to cities to improve civic engagement and volunteerism.

“Embracing volunteers is not just about responding to the immediate fiscal crisis; I want to make volunteerism a key part of how the city provides services in the future,” DeMaio concluded. To view the full report, please visit: www.sandiego.gov/cd5.

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